

**STRENGTHENING POLICY TOOLS
TO ACHIEVE INTEGRATED
COASTAL MANAGEMENT**

*Second Semiannual Report for Year 1
October 30, 2002- April 03 2003*

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With notes in the global advance since it's beginning

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

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In order to improve the actual Mexican legal framework, it is urgent to raise awareness among the region's stakeholders and decision makers on employing the land and resource use planning tool for improved coastal zone management.

This project aims to improve capacities of local and federal authorities responsible for enforcement, to better manage OET implementation and compliance, with a focus on the tourism sector. Additionally, the project seeks the participation of WWW and collaborators, in the legislative process to hopefully create two new federal laws, a Coastal Law and a Protected Areas Law, making marine resource use planning a stronger tool and ensuring the incorporation of integrated coastal management principles into planning processes.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2ST YEAR:

This report reflects the work done by WWF Mexico and its consultants during the first semester of the second year of the project “STRENGTHENING POLICY TOOLS TO ACHIEVE INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT”. As in every project related to environmental policy, this report includes direct WWF action and collaboration of our partners, among who is noteworthy the Coalition for the Sustainability of the Gulf of California (CSGC), Conservation International (CI), the Network of Universities of Mexico’s Northwest (UAS, UNISON, UABC and UABCS) and in the Mesoamerican Reef, Amigos de Sian Ka’an, (ASK), the Staff of the coastal Protected Areas and the Mexican Association of Adventure Tourism (AMTAVE).

1. National policy tools (umbrella)
2. Mesoamerican Reef ecoregion
3. Gulf of California ecoregion

HIGHLIGHTS OF RESULTS

National Policy Tools

- *Collaboration in the Public consultation process of the OET for the Sea of Cortes.*
- NOM proposal for shrimp aquaculture ready to be presented to federal authorities

Mesoamerican Reef

- ✓ Environmental watchdogs (guardias ambientales) operating and follow-up.
- ✓ MOU WWF, AMTAVE.
- ✓ MOU WWF SEDETUR (Quintana Roo, Tourism Agency).
- ✓ MOU WWF AHRM.
- ✓ Ecotourism product design with AMTAVE (Whale Shark watching.)
- ✓ Alternative Tourism Committee for Quintana Roo created and operating.

Gulf of California

- ✓ Support SEMARNAT during the public consultation process of the OET for the Gulf of California through the parallel invitation to key regional stakeholders to participation in the process and in the public forum convoked by SEMARNAT
- ✓ Socialization and endorsement of the Gulf of California OET model promoted (Land and Marine Use Plan)
- ✓ Design of the watchdogs surveillance program for the Gulf of California
- ✓ GIS system defined in the watchdogs surveillance program

Mexico's environmental agenda is concentrated on the over harvesting of natural resources produced by the absence of an ecological culture, the misconception, the necessities of regional communities and because of the public policies and markets promoting unsustainable and non diverse productive activities, and a very limited capacity to limit access to natural resources. Since 1982 the Mexican environmental policy has changed to establish a new policy for environmental protection implementing ecological planning tools such as: Sectorial programs, regional sustainable development programs, ecological land and marine zoning plans, environmental impact assessments, and ecological taxes.

Furthermore, focused on the protection of national ecosystems and to ensure the well-being of local communities pending on them, large numbers of conservationist organizations and governmental agencies have initiated solid efforts to preserve the Mexican richness working together to develop effective planning tool to set a long term sustainable vision on the natural sources administration.

Although the lack on management policies, present situation, offers a unique opportunity to build new bridges and innovative approaches for the use of natural resources and their protection as the **only way** to ensure the future of a growing national population and to improve its quality of life. Even when the number of established Protected areas is increasing, the main challenge of the conservation is not only focused on the PA decrees, which in some cases could be identified as merely paper parks, but in the promotion of co-participate decision making processes with multi-sector representation. In the light of this approach, WWF identifies the Land Use Plans as an effective instrument of public policy to orient the project and activities within the coastal area.

Gulf of California: One of the major interests of the conservationist sector in the correct development of the Gulf of California OET is the incipient development of the Nautical Ladder. The objective were to establish an appropriate protection and conservation policies as a strategy to deal with the mega-development project called Nautical Ladder (*Escalera Náutica*) proposed by the federal government through the National Fund for Tourism Development (FONATUR). WWF and our partners strongly believe that the Nautical ladder has the potential to negatively affect the biodiversity of the region, thus the Coalition for the Sustainability of the Gulf of California (CSGC)— defined its position concerning conservation priorities for the Gulf of California at a workshop held in Mazatlán, Mexico, in May 2001.

The Nautical Ladder project is a two-phase initiative that calls for the establishment of 22 full-service marinas on both Baja California coasts as well as the mainland on the Sea of Cortez. It also calls for an 84-mile highway for towing boats from the Pacific side of the Baja Peninsula to the Gulf, eliminating the need to sail all the way to the Cape before ending the sea, and for the improvement of the road between Mexicali and San Felipe, including renovations to ten existing airports and ten airstrips to facilitate travel among the chain of marinas. The goal of the Nautical Ladder project is to increase U.S. boaters to the region and to help build infrastructure and provide jobs for the people of Baja.

On the other hand the actual Mexican environmental law, requires that the research needed to develop a Ordenamiento Ecológico Territorial (OET) is the responsibility of the Dirección General de Investigación de Ordenamiento Ecológico y Conservación de los Ecosistemas, that is part of the Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE), from the Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT). Furthermore the implementation of the OETs are the realm of the Subsecretaría de Política Ambiental y Vinculación Sectorial from SEMARNAT, with the participation of Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA) and the Dirección General de la Zona Federal Marítimo Terrestre (ZOFEMAT).

The lobbyinig process is the participation and incorporation of the different stakeholders to the planning process of the OET. This lobbying can be described as a the technical, legal and management actions aimed at building consensus at the three different government levels, the private sector and civil society at the planning, zoning and economic activity that makes use of the natural resources. By law, the OET assessment must be completed prior to the implementation of the Nautical Ladder project in order to prevent and minimize environmental effects in the region.

OBJECTIVE 1: USE EXPERIENCE OF EXISTING OETs TO INFORM FUTURE PROCESSES.

The project targeted two areas: the Mesoamerican Reef and The Gulf of California.

A LOOKING BACK

Planned Activities

- Consultant will carry out an analysis of the current status of 3/5 OET that are in use or in development along the coasts in the Mexican Caribbean.
- Organize regionally focused workshops for targeted audiences to share results from analysis. To get consensus an input from stakeholders.
- Work with Sian Ka'an Reserve Director to facilitate a successful OET for the biosphere reserve.

Expected Outcomes

- OET analyses for the Costa Maya, which can be used to inform OET processes throughout Mexico.
- Recommendations on improved use of OETs in the Costa Maya
- Recommendations to build capacity for effective OET implementation, along with ways to incorporate an adaptive and transparent process for correcting weaknesses or gaps in the instrument and its application.

Strategies Used

The WWF has been supporting and participating in various processes aimed at the creation of awareness and consensus building among the different stakeholders that have an important role in the use of the coastal resources of Quintana Roo. These activities have been supported by quality information and analyses generated through consultancies commissioned by the WWF.

Actual Results

- Sian Ka'an OET published after a successful participatory process.
- Comparative analysis of Costa Maya, Nichupte Lagoon and Cancun Tulum Corridor (Riviera Maya) finished and sent to different stakeholders for analysis.
- Technical input to the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve and Xcalak National Park Directors to facilitate OET implementation
- Join report (April 2003) on OET activities
-

LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges/Constraints/Observations

The momentum and interest of the different stakeholders in the OET has been maintained as a result of past activities and the interest of Municipal and State authorities and the participation of organized groups such as the "Environmental Watchdogs".

Proposed Strategies

Working closely with the MPAs Directors and staff, plus the integration of local stakeholders has been successful due to the fact that the processes and common visions on sustainability had been internalized by the communities, authorities and some members of the academia. For the rest of the life of project WWF will continue with these strategies.

The last workshops with the lead of the WWF will disseminate the technical information among the different stakeholders in order to apply the common strategy and goals directed to the implementation of the OETs as a truly participatory process.

B. Gulf of California

LOOKING BACK

Planned Activities

- ✓ Analyze the current status of 3/5 OET that are in use or in development along the coasts in the Mexican Caribbean and the Gulf of California.
- ✓ Organize regionally focused workshops for targeted audiences to share results from analysis. Gain input from stakeholders (including SEMARNAT, PROFEPA, local authorities, local key stakeholders, and academic and NGO sectors)
- ✓ Support SEMARNAT for the OET Instrumentation Phase (Gulf of California)

Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Formal delivery of OET analysis to Dr. Luis Bojorquez in charge of the SEMARNAT – OET and Environmental policy Direction.
- ✓ Coordination agreement Signed for OET instrumentation
- ✓ Organize 4 regional workshops in the Gulf of California for OET
- ✓ Lesson learned and recommendations from OETs in Costa Maya included in final Gulf OET.

Strategies Used

WWF had planned to develop 4 parallel workshops to the OET meetings convoked by the SEMARNAT secretary, towards the signature of a coordination agreement for the OET Model. However and after careful review of the situation during a meeting with SEMARNAT authorities, WWF consider that the best option to support the OET process in order to gain more credibility as a legal regulation, it was better that WWF convoke other regional stakeholders from NGO's and private sector to participate in the public consultation process for the OET. The idea was that WWF could contribute with travel expenses to those people interested in participate in the reunion to demonstrate the transparency of the process and secure all sectors representation.

Actual Results

- ✓ Support SEMARNAT during the public consultation process of the OET for the Gulf of California through the parallel invitation to key regional stakeholders to participation in the process and in the public forum convoked by SEMARNAT.
- ✓ Analysis report of the Coastal law management presented to SEMARNAT authorities at the environmental policy department.

LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges/Constraints/Observations

Even when the idea of support the SEMARNAT OET process was to secure a wider participation of key people in the public consult, some sectors (mainly industrial fishery sector) misunderstood the general idea and criticize and discredit de OET as a legal instrument with the only purpose of inhibit the regional development.

Proposed Strategies

Conservationist sector must keep supporting SEMARNAT actions to conclude the officialization of the OET model and contribute to its adaptative management; however, in order to guarantee its efficiency, conservation sector must also look the implementation of the instrument not only as a regulator for the nautical route project, but also for the entire regional, sectorial and state development plans.

OBJECTIVE 2: FACILITATE EFFECTIVE INCLUSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES IN THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF OETs IN TWO REGIONS

A. Mesoamerican reef

LOOKING BACK

Planned Activities

- A consultant will help facilitate the integration of environmental issues by the Committee for the integrated management of Costa Maya in the implementation of the Costa Maya OET.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased awareness among local and regional decision makers as well as federal agency representatives and the tourism sector regarding OETs as resource use planning tools.
- List of key recommendations and successes produced and disseminated.

Strategies Used

Close collaboration with SEMARNAT and local stakeholders in the creation of a Committee for the Environmental Guards.

Linkage of the Committee and the network of guards to assist in the monitoring of adequate implementations of the legal instruments.

Actual Results

- Environmental Guards for the sustainable development of Costa Maya created and operating.
- Second workshop on follow-up of enforcement of Costa Maya environmental Law
- Key recommendations ready and in press
- Records and follow-up of complains and suits presented to PROFEPA

- Manual for Environmental Watchdogs finished and in press.

LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges/Constraints/Observations

Environmental Guards need to be supported and the activities need to be monitored in order to develop a “fine tuning” of the actions; these need to be recorded in order to document the lessons learned, this will ensure a continued quality control of the implementation. As with any experience of this kind the motivation will decrease if the network do not see results of their activity and if the authorities does not enforce the law and punish the infractions.

Proposed Strategies

It is necessary that the lessons learned and the impact of the principles promoted is reported as well as the successes achieved in order to create momentum and advocacy among the network. It is also of outmost importance to share the lessons with other areas in Quintana Roo. The results, records and manuals will be published and uploaded to the Website that is being developed.

B. Gulf of California

LOOKING BACK

Planned Activities

- ✓ Collaborate with SEMARNAT and INE to ensure incorporation of the results of conservation priorities for biodiversity in the Gulf of California in the planning process.
- ✓ Four watchdogs’ regional groups created in the Gulf of California with the participation of the NW Mexico alliance, the Gulf of California Coalition and the academic sector as well in order to support the PROFEPA law enforcement activities.

Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Official Declaration of the OET model
- ✓ Ecological strategies available as regulations criteria for the MOET
- ✓ GIS system established for the watchdogs surveillance program
- ✓ Lists of information available
- ✓ Workshops minutes and 4 regional groups trained in the use of Watchdogs program

Strategies Used

The basic strategy to include the conservation priorities in the OET of the Sea of Cortes, was the solid scientific support of the priorities portfolio and the large number of well know institutions and experts that back it up. This jointly with the close relation with the National Ecology Institute of SEMARNAT, set the basis to include the priorities portfolio as a proper ground to include environmental considerations to new regulatory lines for future regional development

Actual Results

- ✓ Socialization and endorsement of the Gulf of California OET model promoted (Land and Marine Use Plan)
- ✓ Decision making support system (look before you by) for environmental watchdogs designed, including protocols and procedures.
- ✓ Compilation and management of databases and available information for watchdogs program including:
 - MEXICAN OFFICIAL GAZETTE INFORMATION
 - NAUTICAL ROUTE DOCUMENTS
 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESTMENT
 - REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
 - MEXICAN OFFICAL REGULATIONS
 - STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS
 - STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS
 - STATE AND MUNICIPAL MANAGMENT PLANS
 - SEA OF CORTES LAND USE PLAN
- ✓ 2 Informative sessions in related to the watchdogs surveillance program for regional groups (ISLA, A.C. and TNC Baja California Sur)

LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges/Constraints/Observations

The great challenge to face once the Coordination agreement is signed is the Nautical Route project. This could be probably the most important implication to test the OET efficiency as a legal regulation based on participative process. The Regional impact assessment has already been presented by Fonatur and the new marina locations are now ready to be re-evaluated.

Proposed Strategies

Next steps which include the sign of the coordination agreement between state and federal government must be based in a clear perspective of what the OET attempt to be and the general benefits for all parties of its instrumentation to regulate regional development. A very important issue is that even when SEMARNAT will require the help of conservationist NGO's as WWF to back up the OET establishment, this support must be according to every one position and role.

OBJECTIVE 3: COMMUNICATION OF THE RESULTS TO IMPACT INDIVIDUAL AND POLITICAL DECISION MAKING TO CONSIDER CONSERVATION PRIORITIES AND THE OUTCOME OF OET PROCESSES

A. Mesoamerican reef

LOOKING BACK

Planned Activities

- Hire a consultant to develop a pilot web page to disseminate information on the State of Quintana Roo OET, specifically to disseminate information to facilitate compliance to the regulation.
- Participation in the elaboration of key national level policy tools aimed at coastal resources. Examples include: Federal Coastal Law, Federal Protected Areas Law, General Law for OETs

Expected Outcomes

- Communication campaign strategy established.
- Legislative process enriched for federal laws regarding coastal and marine management.
- Decision making system for Environmental Guards and potential user/investors (Look Before you Buy)

Strategies Used

Website design development and maintenance.

Actual Results

Website with information in process of being launched

LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges/Constraints/Observations

A communication strategy is of paramount importance to make sure that the tools are socialized and used properly. If the information does not reach the potential users the implementation will be difficult.

Proposed Strategies

Development of bilingual website with the information and links necessary.

Booklets with information.

Media campaign to advertise the site and its utility and convenience.

B. Gulf of California

LOOKING BACK

Planned Activities

- ✓ Web site to disseminate information on the State of Quintana Roo OET and Gulf of California, specifically to disseminate information to facilitate compliance to the regulation finished and operating.
- ✓ Participation in the elaboration of key national level policy tools aimed at coastal resources. Examples include: Mexican official norms

Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Gulf Bilingual Website operating
- ✓ GIS system established in the watchdogs surveillance program
- ✓ Aquaculture shrimp NOM proposal formally presented to SEMARNAT authorities
- ✓ Advocacy activities carried out will be reported (although the official release of a Mexican NOM is subjected to government willing and timing)
- ✓ Marinas NOM proposal officially presented to SEMARNAT authorities

Actual Results

- ✓ NOM proposal for shrimp aquaculture ready to be presented to federal authorities
- ✓ Regional Environmental impact assessment for nautical route release by FONATUR
- ✓ Design of the Watchdogs surveillance program website and programmer consultant hired

LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges/Constraints/Observations

A challenge to come within the watchdog surveillance program is the involvement of PROFEPA authorities since they are the governmental agency responsible of the environmental regulations. The commitment of PROFEPA authorities jointly with the participation of key regional groups to monitor the system is complete necessary for the success of the project, if we want to establish a well coordinated mechanism to watch for a healthy environmental development.

On the other hand and very linked with the surveillance program, is the required evaluation of the regional impact assessment released by FONATUR for the nautical route project.

Proposed Strategies

A strong communication campaign must be developed during the next few month not only to promote the watchdogs surveillance program start up and objectives, but also to aware general public and government about the incipient development of the nautical route, and bring and accurate interpretation of the Impact Evaluation presented, its implications and the viability of the project.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ There is a misperception between the relation of conservationist NGO's with SEMARNAT inside and out government agencies.
- ✓ The industrial shrimp fishery of the Gulf of California region will continue to obstacle the OET process, even when they have been taked into account to participate in it.
- ✓ It is necessary and intensive communication campaign to raise the profil of the OET process.

Advance Geographical Information Systems and Developing Capacity for GIS

Design of the GIS systems for the watchdog's surveillance program in the Gulf of California Project.

The WWF Mesoamerican Reef does not have a GIS developed but, local NGOs such as Amigos de Sian Ka'an already have a GIS that is used to achieve the objectives of the project.

Participation in International Conferences.

None

Program Coordination and Collaborations.

This report reflects the work done by WWF Mexico and it's consultants during the first year of the project "STRENGTHENING POLICY TOOLS TO ACHIEVE INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT".

As in every project related to environmental policy, this report includes direct WWF action and collaboration of our partners, among who is noteworthy the Coalition for the Sustainability of the Gulf of California (CSGC), Conservation International (CI), the Network of Universities of Mexico's Northwest (UAS, UNISON, UABC and UABCS) and in the Mesoamerican Reef, Amigos de Sian Ka'an, (ASK), the Staff of the coastal Protected Areas and the Mexican Association of Adventure Tourism (AMTAVE).